

Case Number:	CM14-0168431		
Date Assigned:	10/16/2014	Date of Injury:	02/10/2010
Decision Date:	11/18/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/24/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/13/2014

HOW THE IMR FINAL DETERMINATION WAS MADE

MAXIMUS Federal Services sent the complete case file to an expert reviewer. He/she has no affiliation with the employer, employee, providers or the claims administrator. The expert reviewer is Board Certified in Occupational Medicine and is licensed to practice in Illinois. He/she has been in active clinical practice for more than five years and is currently working at least 24 hours a week in active practice. The expert reviewer was selected based on his/her clinical experience, education, background, and expertise in the same or similar specialties that evaluate and/or treat the medical condition and disputed items/services. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

CLINICAL CASE SUMMARY

The expert reviewer developed the following clinical case summary based on a review of the case file, including all medical records:

The injured worker is a 59 year old female with a date of injury on 2/10/2010 who has persistent cervicalgia, thoracic spine, bilateral shoulder, bilateral elbow, bilateral knee and lumbar spine pain with minimal radiographic evidence of abnormalities except arthritis and old changes. Numerous topical analgesics/muscle relaxants are being requested.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

The Final Determination was based on decisions for the disputed items/services set forth below:

Retrospective compound Terocin/Flurbiprofen/Lidocaine/Amitriptyline Cream, (duration and frequency unknown), dispensed on 12/4/13: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111-113.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111-113.

Decision rationale: Per Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, topical non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs have been shown in meta-analysis to be superior to placebo during the first 2 weeks of treatment for osteoarthritis, but either not afterward, or with a diminishing effect over another 2-week period. When investigated specifically for osteoarthritis of the knee, topical non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs have been shown to be superior to placebo for 4 to 12 weeks.

In this study the effect appeared to diminish over time and it was stated that further research was required to determine if results were similar for all preparations. These medications may be useful for chronic musculoskeletal pain, but there are no long-term studies of their effectiveness or safety . Per Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, if one drug (or drug class) in the compounded product is not recommended, and then the entire compound is not recommended. Flurbiprofen cream is not addressed. The efficacy in clinical trials for this treatment modality has been inconsistent and most studies are small and of short duration. The efficacy in clinical trials for this treatment modality has been inconsistent and most studies are small and of short duration.

Retrospective compound Gabapentin/Cyclobenzaprine/Tramadol Cream, (duration and frequency unknown), dispensed on 12/4/13: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111-113.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111-113.

Decision rationale: Per Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, topical non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs have been shown in meta-analysis to be superior to placebo during the first 2 weeks of treatment for osteoarthritis, but either not afterward, or with a diminishing effect over another 2-week period. When investigated specifically for osteoarthritis of the knee, topical non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs have been shown to be superior to placebo for 4 to 12 weeks. In this study the effect appeared to diminish over time and it was stated that further research was required to determine if results were similar for all preparations. These medications may be useful for chronic musculoskeletal pain, but there are no long-term studies of their effectiveness or safety. Per Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, if one drug (or drug class) in the compounded product is not recommended, and then the entire compound is not recommended.